VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

JULY 2001 ONE DOLLAR

Director's Column

William L. Woodfin, Jr

Fun and Relaxation in the Outdoors

Now that summer is upon us, it's time to turn our thoughts to vacation, fun and relaxation in the outdoors, time spent with friends and family. During the next few months, hopefully everyone will have a chance to take a break from the daily grind and to spend several days recharging those internal batteries that carry us through the rest of the year. The ideal vacation experience for many will be long walks along lush green mountain trails. For others, cool, wet sand between your toes and the sound of waves lapping the shore will serve to rejuvenate your body and soul. Regardless of where your "perfect summer" happens, the most important part is that it leaves you with fond memories of the time shared with family and friends and also with a renewed appreciation for the bounty and wonderfulness of our outdoor resources.

During the early part of June, the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation kicked off their first-ever National Fishing and Boating Week. Also continuing again for the second year was Governor Gilmore's Governor's Angling Extravaganza. Each of these celebrations provided tremendous opportunities for meaningful, quality time to reconnect with family, friends, and the environment, and, as we all know, you have to work really hard not to relax when you're on the water.

Although vacation usually means a time for relaxation, many of you might be looking for something more challenging and educational. Should that be the case, then think about taking the time to sign up for one of the many classes offered by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF). Classes are available throughout the state and a list of times and locations are available by calling (804) 367-9369 or by visiting the department's Web site at www.dgif.state.va.us. Also, a reminder that coming this fall will be Virginia Outdoors Weekend, September 14-16 at Hungry Mother State Park in Marion, Va., Women in the Outdoors, September 29, at the Izaak Walton League Park in Centreville, Va., and Virginia Outdoors Woman Mother-Daughter Event, October 5-7, at Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center in Appomattox, Va. These educational events are offered by the Department's Outdoor Education Program; for additional information or to register contact Hilary Welch at (804) 367-6351.

Each summer and throughout the year VDGIF biologists, game wardens, and professional staff members are busy traveling the state and attending a wide variety of events, from outdoor-related programs to local fairs. It is often at these events that the public has a chance to meet our dedicated professionals who are personally on hand to answer many of your questions about Virginia's wildlife and natural resources.

One such popular and crowd-pleasing event that has really become a summertime tradition is The Virginia Outdoors Sportsman's Show, which is celebrating its 18th year and will be held on August 10-12 at The ShowPlace in Richmond. Filled with vendors displaying the latest in hunting equipment, professionals discussing outdoor tips to make you a better hunter, and some of the biggest bucks and wild turkey mounts harvested in Virginia, the show has become a great way to start the new hunting season. Department personnel will be on hand to answer your law enforcement or wildlife-related questions, scoring deer and turkey mounts for The Virginia Deer and Turkey Classic contest, and selling hunting and fishing licenses and the new 2001-2002 Virginia Wildlife Calendar. This is a great event for the whole family and one you don't want to miss.

Don't miss your chance to visit The Virginia Outdoors Sportsman's Show, August 10-12, The ShowPlace, 3000 Mechanicsville Turnpike, Richmond, Virginia.

For more information on The Virginia Outdoors Sportsman's Show call (804) 748-7529 or take aim at their Web site at www.sportsmanshow.com.

So before you make your vacation plans this summer give us a call and let the VDGIF be your guide to Virginia's great outdoors. And just as a reminder, regardless of what your summer plans involve, please remember the importance of safety as you enjoy and experience our natural resources. Hope everyone has a truly memorable summer!

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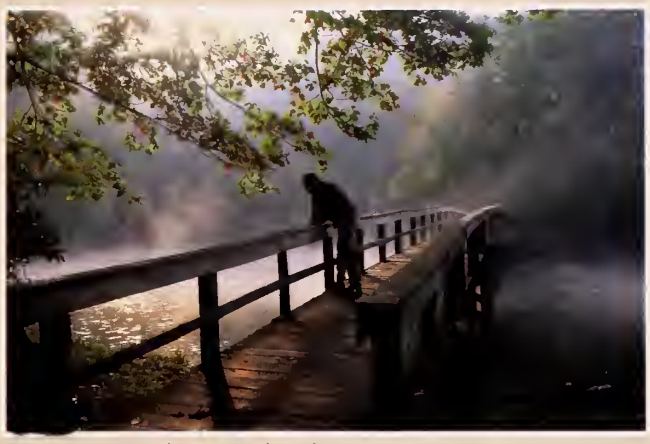

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Cover: Great blue heron *(Ardea herodias)*, ©Bill Lea.

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Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Natural Resources

VOLUME 62 NUMBER 7

©Bruce Ingram

Rivers of

Romance

Canoeing Virginia's four most popular highland rivers.

by Bruce Ingram

One of the best ways my wife Elaine and I spend quality time together is canoeing Virginia's four major highland rivers: the James, New, Rappahannock, and South Fork of the Shenandoah. We aren't interested in running Class III rapids that require deft maneuvers and advanced paddling skills. But we do relish those excursions where we can drift lazily along, observe wildlife, fish, and most importantly, revel together in the beauty of the surrounding mountains and rural countryside.

And when our day on the water concludes, the two of us often head for a nearby restaurant and a local bed and breakfast (B&B). Here, then, is a couple-friendly float trip from each of the streams.

James River

A beautiful outing on the upper James is the 7-mile float from Alpine to Natural Bridge Station in Botetourt and Rockbridge Counties. The river left put-in is across from an abandoned store on Route 608/622.

Our favorite part of this excursion is some remains of the James River & Kanawha Canal that tower above the stream on river left about 2 miles into the float. The canal, with George Washington as a major supporter and with a grandiose goal of connecting its two namesake rivers, served as a major conduit for commerce until the mid-1800s. But the coming of the railroads and the Civil War doomed this ambitious project. We like to take photographs of the rock structure and partake of a shore lunch on a small island directly across from the canal remains.

This trek also teems with wildlife. The Jefferson National Forest borders the James on river right for much of the trip, and forest birds such as wood thrushes, Carolina wrens, and ovenbirds, frequently add their voices to the surroundings.

Another scenic section occurs about 5 miles from the put-in. An easy Class I rapid, formed by a 3-foot high ledge, punctuates the river and forms a rock-studded pool. Look upstream from the pool and you'll see an enchanting combination of mountains, forested shoreline, and rapids.

The river left take-out at Natural Bridge Station (located on Route 759 next to a lumberyard) exists several hundred yards below an ebony railroad bridge, which looks as if it is sunken in the middle. In reality, this is but an optical illusion—but the pleasures to be found on this trip definitely are not.

The Rappahannock

Although we live close to the James and New, I must admit that the Rappahannock is the most beautiful river Elaine and I have ever canoed. It is not mere chance, however, that this river, located in the heavily populated Northern Virginia area, continues to flow through a pristine setting.

Much of the Rappahannock is protected under the Scenic River Act, and many enlightened landowners have tried to maintain the sylvan setting of the watershed. Also in many places, the city of Fredericksburg owns the banks on both sides of the "Rap," and the city fathers have recognized that the river is the crown jewel of Old Dominion waterways.

The only drawback for some paddlers is that they must commit to a two-day float. The premier section is the 24 miles from Kellys Ford on Route 620 to Motts Run Landing (both access points on river right) in Fredericksburg—a trek too far to cover in a day.

The best way to tackle this section is to canoe 16 miles the first day to the confluence of the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers. A number of campsites dot the river right shoreline, especially at the confluence and the first several hundred yards below it. Then you can leisurely make your way to Mott's Landing

©Bruce Ingram

The heavily forested George Washington and Jefferson National Forest and some early morning fog adds a pleasing backdrop while floating along the Alpine stretch of the James River.

©Bruce Ingram

The Bixler Bridge float along the South Fork of the Shenandoah River offers a number of bluffs and scenic shorelines.

the following day, and "recuperate" at the many restaurants and B&Bs in Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County.

Two scenic areas stand out on the first leg of the journey. An inviting place is Snake Castle Rock, a cabin-sized boulder that occurs on river left several hours into the junket. A small island of aquatic grass, a deep pool, and a sandy bank make this area a charming place to swim, bask in the sun, and dine on a shore lunch.

The other is a long outside bend of well over a mile that occurs just above the confluence. Expect to see ospreys, belted kingfishers, and, perhaps, a bald eagle along this section of the "Rap." Sycamores, silver maples, and river birch form a dense canopy along the shoreline. Most importantly, the Rappahannock itself proves that an idyllic river can survive the environmental destruction of the 20th century, and today it serves as a refuge for wildlife and for those who love rivers.

South Fork of the Shenandoah

Many years ago, I took my first junket down the South Fork of the Shenandoah, the Bixler Bridge to Bealers Ferry trip, and today this 8-miler remains a favorite. Christian Goebel, of Shenandoah River Outfitters in Luray, relates that this outing is ideal for novice paddlers because of its gentle flow and gorgeous surroundings.

Perhaps the prettiest section occurs on the last mile of the float. There the Blue Ridge Mountains dominate the horizon ahead and the Massanutten Mountains command the view behind. Several riffles speckle the river through this area, one of which features a nearby Indian fish trap.

(Above) Smallmouth bass fishing can be a pleasant diversion while floating down the Rappahannock River. (Right) What better way to prepare for a day on a Virginia river then to stay at a historic bed and breakfast, like the Littlepage Inn, located near the Rappahannock River in Spotsylvania County. Photos ©Bruce Ingram.

Native Americans built these upside down V rock formations from bank to bank and just under the surface. To alarm fish, these resourceful people dragged stones attached to grapevines along the bottom and herded the fish into the enclosure where they were netted. Interestingly, the word "Shenandoah" is Native American for "Daughter of the Stars," an appropriate appellation for such a heavenly waterway.

Another marvelous section comes into view about half way into the excursion. A series of farms, meadows, and weathered barns combine with the Massanutten Mountains to create a visually stunning backdrop.

The Bixler Bridge put-in is on river left off routes 675 and 684 in Page County, and the take-out is also on river left, just off Route 684. Overall, the South Fork of the Shenandoah probably offers more easy-to-negotiate float trips than any other major river in the Old Dominion.

The New River

The New is known for its whitewater, but actually hosts several tranquil sections. One of those is the

12-miler from Independence to Baywood, which is a very pleasant float through rural countryside and one that is perfect for beginners. The river left put-in is located on Route 700, off Route 21. The river right take-out lies just past the Route 58/221 Bridge.

One of the most picturesque sections occurs about halfway through when the mountains can be seen from both sides of the upper New. Quite a few older homesteads dot both shorelines, and a nice mixture of woodlots, fields, and barns lie near the river. Because of this diversity of habitat, a wide variety of songbirds nest along this section. Expect to hear forest birds such as hooded warblers, red-eyed vireos, and tufted titmice one moment and edge or field avians such as white-eyed vireos, meadowlarks, and field sparrows a short time later.

Another favorite spot is where the Little River enters the New on river right. Just downstream from the confluence rests a sandy beach that is a popular place to take a break and to compose pictures of the surrounding mountains.

Canoeing Virginia's four most popular highland rivers is a joyous way to pass time with a spouse. Just as good, in fact, as spending romantic moments that evening at a restaurant, followed by a night at a bed and breakfast! ☐

Bruce Ingram is a nationally renowned outdoor writer/photographer from Fincastle, Virginia. His latest book The James River Guide, Fishing and Floating on Virginia's Finest *is an excellent source of information for floating the James River from its headwaters to Richmond. The book contains maps, detailed trip descriptions, and angling tips. For ordering information or to order call Ecopress at 1-800-326-9272 or see their Web site at www.ecopress.com.*

©Dwight Dyke

The New River is the second oldest river in the world, the Nile River being the oldest. Its beauty and angling possibilities are just about endless.

Trip Planner

Anyone, regardless of his or her canoeing skills, should contact an outfitter before planning that maiden trip down any river. And before a float, I like to call liveries to find out current stream and weather conditions. Liveries are quite willing to tutor novices and explain the basic strokes and how to avoid difficult situations. Tourism agencies can supply valuable trip planning information, as well as information about restaurants and accommodations.

James River

Tourism Info
Lynchburg Visitors Information Center (800-732-5821)

Rappahannock River

Tourism Info
Spotsylvania County Department of Tourism and Visitors Center (800-654-4118)

South Fork of the Shenandoah River

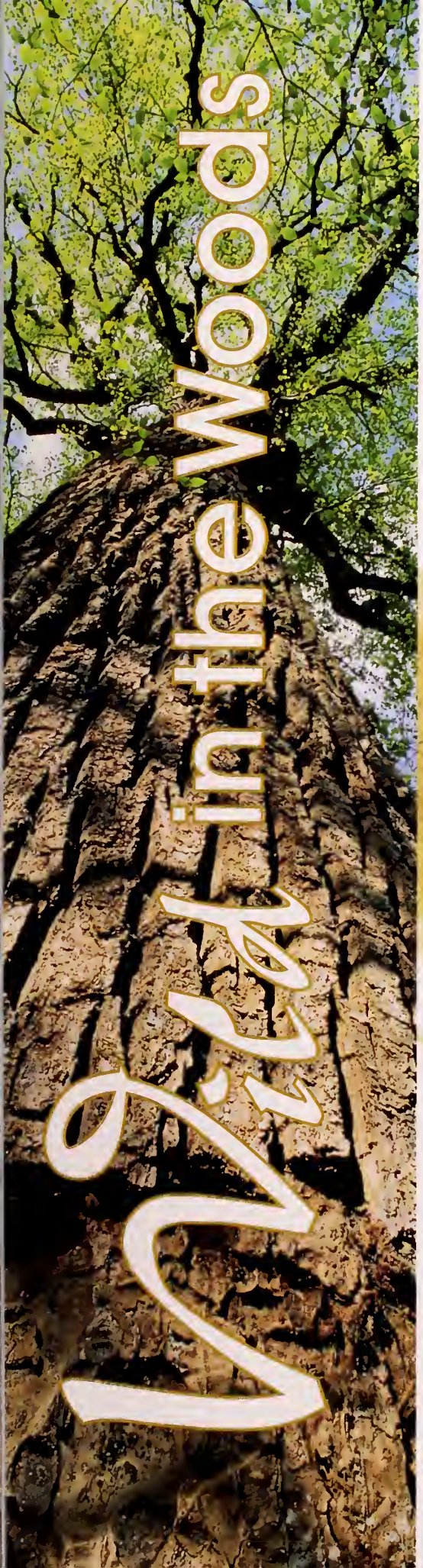
Tourism Info
Front Royal/Warren County Chamber of Commerce (800-338-2576)

New River

Tourism Info
Grayson County Tourism Information Center (540-773-3711)

Information

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (804-367-1000)

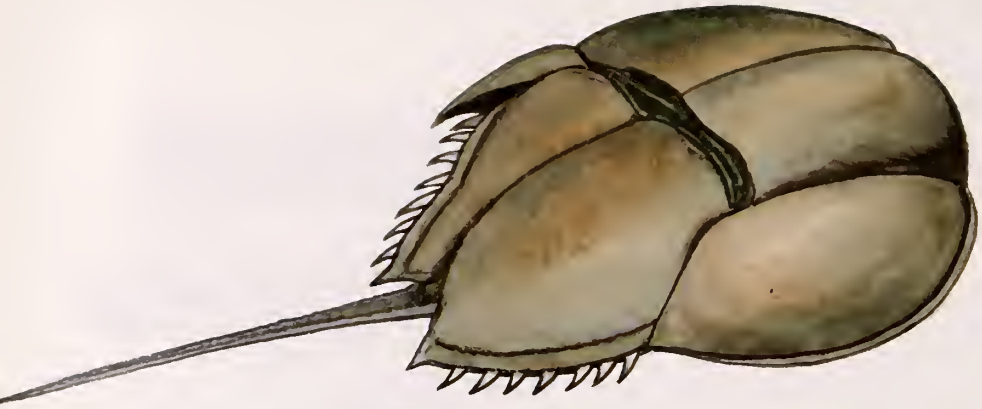


A Coastal Cornucopia

by Carol Heiser and Sally Mills
illustrations by Spike Knuth

Common sand dollar (Echinarachnius parma)

The ocean is a powerful force whose influence extends much further inland than just the place where water meets land. All along the eastern seaboard of Virginia, the coast contains a dizzying range of environments: a melting pot of dunes, swales, flats, marshes, woodlands, and bays. Many factors shape the physical features of the coast, with the most prominent being waves, tides, and wind-action. Because the ocean influences the salinity, oxygen concentration, and temperature of the water that is further inland, there are distinct plant and animal communities associated with the varying degrees of brackish water and sandy soils. Three primary habitats—the beach, maritime forest, and salt marsh—are characterized by an abundant diversity of life that is adapted to survive the constantly changing, sometimes harsh conditions of the coastline.



Horseshoe crab eggs

The Horseshoe Crab

The Atlantic horseshoe crab (Limulus polyphemus) *is more closely related to spiders than crabs. It grows to 20 inches in length and is covered in a hard, turtle-shaped shell, which has sharp spiny edges and a long hard tail. The mouth is surrounded by five pairs of walking legs with pincers in the front that they use to feed with. Each spring along the mid-Atlantic coast, horseshoe crabs come ashore during high tide and lay their eggs, which in turn serve as a major food source for thousands of shorebirds.*

A common, but rather ancient-looking beach visitor is the horseshoe crab, whose hard carapace and long, pointy *telson* (tail) have frightened more than a few curious toddlers. This crab is really an arthropod that dwells and feeds on the ocean floor and ventures once a year to mid-Atlantic beaches—especially Delaware Bay—to spawn during late May and early June. Just as horseshoe crabs time their arrival to hitchhike upon the higher tides occurring with the new and full moons, migrating shorebirds time their stopovers to coincide with this activity. At least 20 species of birds congregate along Delaware Bay during spring migration, to gorge themselves upon horseshoe crab eggs laid in sandy beach depressions. The birds attempt to nearly double their body weight before moving on to points north.

Featuring two compound eyes, the horseshoe crab has contributed much to eye research, and its blue blood has proven extremely valuable in screening medical equipment and pharmaceuticals for bacterial contamination. Now appreciated for its role in the diet of shorebirds, fishes, and the juvenile Atlantic loggerhead, the horseshoe crab is undergoing stringent conservation efforts in light of its apparent population decline.

Zones of Change

During summer, sea turtles such as the Atlantic loggerhead deposit eggs in the sand, which become feasts for small mammals. Unfortunately, sea turtles face severe threats to their survival, primarily caused by human disturbances but also influenced by predators like gulls, red foxes, and raccoons, notorious scavengers that regularly feed at the beach. The Sea Turtle Stranding Center operates "rescue squads" in coastal Virginia to help them (see contact information at end of article).

Moving away from the beach, one sees intermittent dunes—home to tall grasses like American beachgrass and seaside goldenrod. Dunes that are not destroyed by sunbathers, beach buggies, or development provide critical habitat for beach-nesting birds like terns, plovers, and oystercatchers.

Behind the primary dunes at a slightly higher elevation are the "fastlands," where plants like prickly pear cactus and fragrant, southern bayberry tough it out against wind and salt spray. Here, the dunes gradually intergrade with the shrub succession community, and just beyond, in the transition to maritime forest, American holly and other evergreens (especially pines), sassafras, and oaks make their stand.

The maritime forest serves as a cool, green backdrop to the dynamic coastal community, where the landscape combines to form a vertical panoply of heights and textures. The diversity of plant species and vegetational structure provides birds, rodents, and small mammals a customized set of perches from which to nest and feed. Whitetail deer dine upon woody scrub and seasonal berries. Up high, the osprey and bald eagle favor more open canopies from which to search for food.

At the end of our journey and further inland, far from the crashing waves, river cuts meander into the floodplain, and salt marshes and tidal flats complete the picture.

Left: Ghost crab (Ocypode quadrata)

The piping plover (Charadrius melodus) *stands an average of 7 inches. Its upper body is a pale gray with a white underside. A single black breast band, often incomplete, and yellow-orange legs and feet, help to identify this rare and threatened species. Found along Virginia's Eastern Shore and the Hampton Roads coastal region, the piping plover prefers to breed and lay its eggs on the open beach. High water, avian and mammalian predators, and human interference have led to decreases in their population.*

Life in the Salt-Marsh

Where fresh, inland waters meet the coast, the salt marsh ecosystem and associated tidal flats offer tremendous productivity. Governed by the daily tides, this area of flat land is flooded with seawater during high tide and exposed down to bare mud flats during low tide. Because of this mixing, the marsh supports a colorful assemblage of animals. Drawn by food, like meadow voles and marsh periwinkles, and by superb places to hide and raise their young, birds, waterfowl, and snakes find respite here in an otherwise watery world.

Shorebirds like herons, egrets, and rails—which have long, skinny legs and slender toes adapted for walking among grasses in the mud—feed on the small fishes, crayfish, shrimps, crabs, and aquatic insects found in the shallows. The mud itself is a kind of organic "soup," loaded with nutrients from the breakdown of dead plant material by insects and bacteria. This organic matter, called *detritus*, provides a rich food source for all the animals further along the food web, such as oysters, clams, shrimp, and the young of marine fish.

A key component of the salt-marsh system is the prevalence of *Spartina* grasses. Grasses help trap the organic matter of the marsh and provide a base for other small plants to grow. They also produce millions of tiny seeds relished by waterfowl and sparrows that stop to feed during their long migratory treks. Muskrats, which live year-round in the salt marsh, dig under *Spartina* mats to feed on the roots and rhizomes beneath the mud.

The typical shoreline ecosystem, which is home to hundreds of animals and birds like the great blue heron (Ardea herodias), *consists of a series of geological changes. Most notably beginning with the ocean or bay water, and then followed by the beach, dunes, salt meadow, tide pool, salt marsh, sandflat, lagoon waters, mud flats, marshes, transitional scrub, maritime forest, upland forest, and finally agricultural crops or urban development.*

Did You Know?

Meter for meter, a salt marsh produces more above-ground vegetation than any other ecosystem on earth, even slightly surpassing a tropical rainforest! A cultivated field, by contrast, produces about one-third the amount of surface plant material.

Folklore

Raccoons are common visitors to beaches and marshes. At one time prized for their fur, raccoons also were valued for their fat, which was used as a leather softener. Other accounts reveal that practitioners of folk medicine applied raccoon fat to heal bruises and scrapes.

Learning More

On Sandy Shores is a 212-page guide containing five in-depth activities for grades 2-4. *Ocean Currents* and its companion guide *Only One Ocean* are written for grades 5-8. All three guides were developed by the Marine Activities, Resources & Education (MARE) program of the Lawrence Hall of Science at the University of California-Berkeley: (510) 642-7771, or www.sargentwelch.com.

The Seaside Naturalist: A Guide to Study at the Seashore, by Deborah A. Coulombe; c. 1984 by the University of New Hampshire. Simon and Schuster, Fireside edition 1992, New York (246 pp.). This is an ideal family reference for a walk on the beach or a beginning study on ocean life. Lots of topics, including urchins, whelks, jellyfish, algae, crabs, skates, and sharks.

Life in the Chesapeake Bay: An Illustrated Guide to Fishes, Invertebrates, and Plants, by Alice J. Lippson and Robert L. Lippson; c. 1984 by the Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD 21218; 5th printing 1991 (230 pp.). A compact guidebook that covers marine animal life in and around the tidewaters of the Chesapeake Bay. Beaches, inter-tidal flats, marshes, and deeper waters are all explored.

The following resources are available from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (quantities limited). Contact our information desk in Richmond at (804) 367-9369:

♦ *Swimming Beyond Boundaries: the Uncertain Future of Virginia's Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles* (magazine reprint)

♦ *A Bird's-Eye View of Coastal Wetlands* (magazine reprint)

♦ Video: *Virginia's Eastern Shore* (c. 1997; 30 minutes; $12.50)

Splash Into These Web Sites!

♦ Virginia Institute of Marine Science www.vims.edu

♦ Coastal Resources and Oyster Heritage, Va. Department of Environmental Quality www.deq.state.va.us

♦ National Marine Educators Association www.marine-ed.org

♦ Center for Marine Conservation www.cmc-ocean.org

♦ Marine Science Consortium http://msconsortium.org

♦ Chesapeake Bay Foundation www.cbf.org

♦ Virginia Marine Science Museum www.vmsm.com

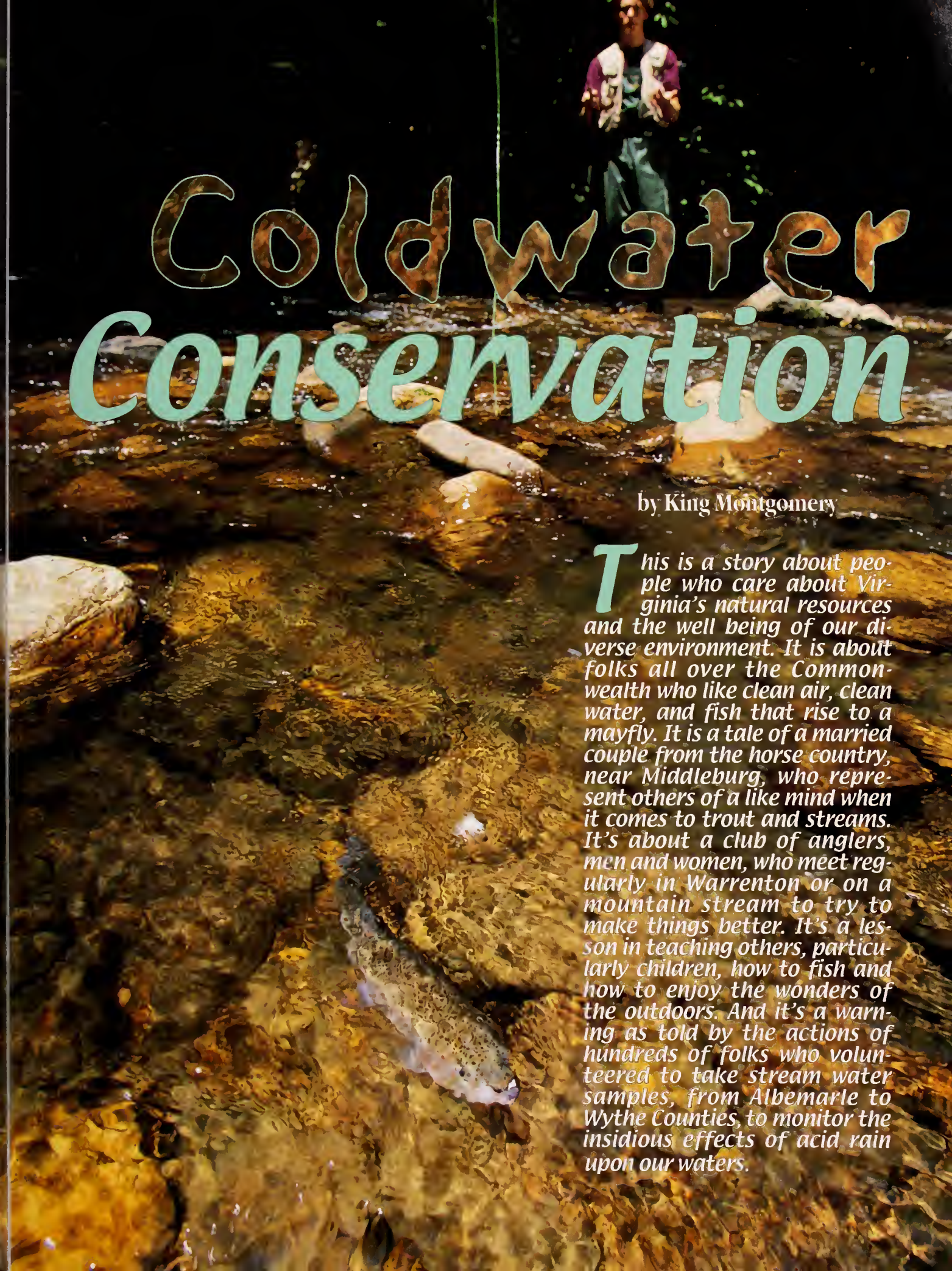
Report Stranded Sea Turtles to the **Sea Turtle Stranding Center:**

➢ James River north to Maryland (804) 684-7313

➢ Eastern Shore and south of James (757) 437-6159

Sally Mills is an outdoor writer and editor for Virginia Sea Grant *at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.*
Carol Heiser is a Habitat Coordinator for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

The sanderling (Calidris alba) *is often seen running ahead of the waves along the beach as it feeds within inches of the surf.*



Coldwater Conservation

by King Montgomery

This is a story about people who care about Virginia's natural resources and the well being of our diverse environment. It is about folks all over the Commonwealth who like clean air, clean water, and fish that rise to a mayfly. It is a tale of a married couple from the horse country, near Middleburg, who represent others of a like mind when it comes to trout and streams. It's about a club of anglers, men and women, who meet regularly in Warrenton or on a mountain stream to try to make things better. It's a lesson in teaching others, particularly children, how to fish and how to enjoy the wonders of the outdoors. And it's a warning as told by the actions of hundreds of folks who volunteered to take stream water samples, from Albemarle to Wythe Counties, to monitor the insidious effects of acid rain upon our waters.

Marcia and Hank

Hank and Marcia Woolman are outdoors people. They fish, hunt, and ride with the hounds. They are leaders in the Rapidan Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Hank was the founding president, and Marcia is the current president. They teach fly-casting, fishing, and fly tying, and also guide trout anglers. Hank, a retired farmer/rancher, builds exquisite split-bamboo fly rods, one of which he donates annually to the Rapidan Trout Unlimited for the annual fund-raising auction at their fly fishing show each February in Middleburg.

Hank is also the Master of the Middleburg-Orange County Beagles, an extension of the Middleburg-Orange County Pony Club. The Pony Club teaches children how to ride to the foxhounds; the care, feeding, and training of the dog pack is Hank's responsibility. Sometimes you can see Hank leading dozens of mounted children and some parents behind several dozen baying hounds in pursuit of a wily fox (which always gets away).

Hank and Marcia's enthusiasm for the outdoors is infectious, a trait readily apparent when you watch them teach small groups fly-casting and fishing near their home between The Plains and Middleburg. In their little slice of country paradise, Hank crafts his cane rods in a small workshop; they teach streamcraft, knots, and entomology at the kitchen table using books and magazines, including *Virginia Wildlife*. They use the dining room table to show students how to tie flies and then the instruction continues on the water down the road at a small farm pond loaded with largemouth bass and sunfish.

Hank's accomplishments are particularly impressive: he lost the fingers of his right hand years ago in a farming accident. Over the years he has adjusted and, through determination and innovation, is able to tie delicate flies, build magnificent cane fly rods, cast a beautiful fly line, catch fish, and ride with the hounds while blowing the traditional hunting horn; all major accomplishments even for someone with two good hands.

The Silver Trout

The Woolmans are an integral part of the Rapidan Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU). Marcia, the president when this article was written, will soon hand over the reins to Greg Safford of Warrenton. Under Marcia's leadership, the Rapidan TU crew won the prestigious Silver Trout Award, the second-highest honor bestowed on a chapter by Trout Unlimited, whose national headquarters is in Arlington.

Charles Gauvin, President and CEO of Trout Unlimited, had high praise for the Virginians at the awards ceremony in New York. "Virginia's Rapidan Chapter represents the very best in volunteerism. The Chapter's record speaks volumes for what a vision, a lot of determination, and sweat equity can do in America."

Marcia Woolman shrugged off her substantial part in winning the Silver Trout calling it "a tribute to all of our members as well as to all of

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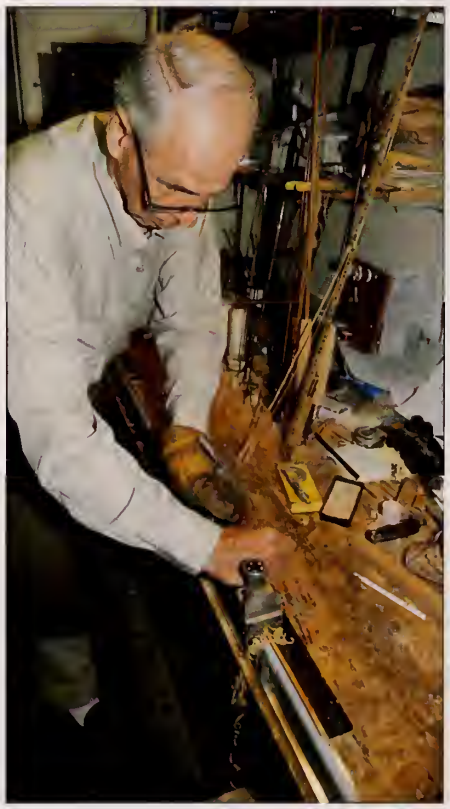
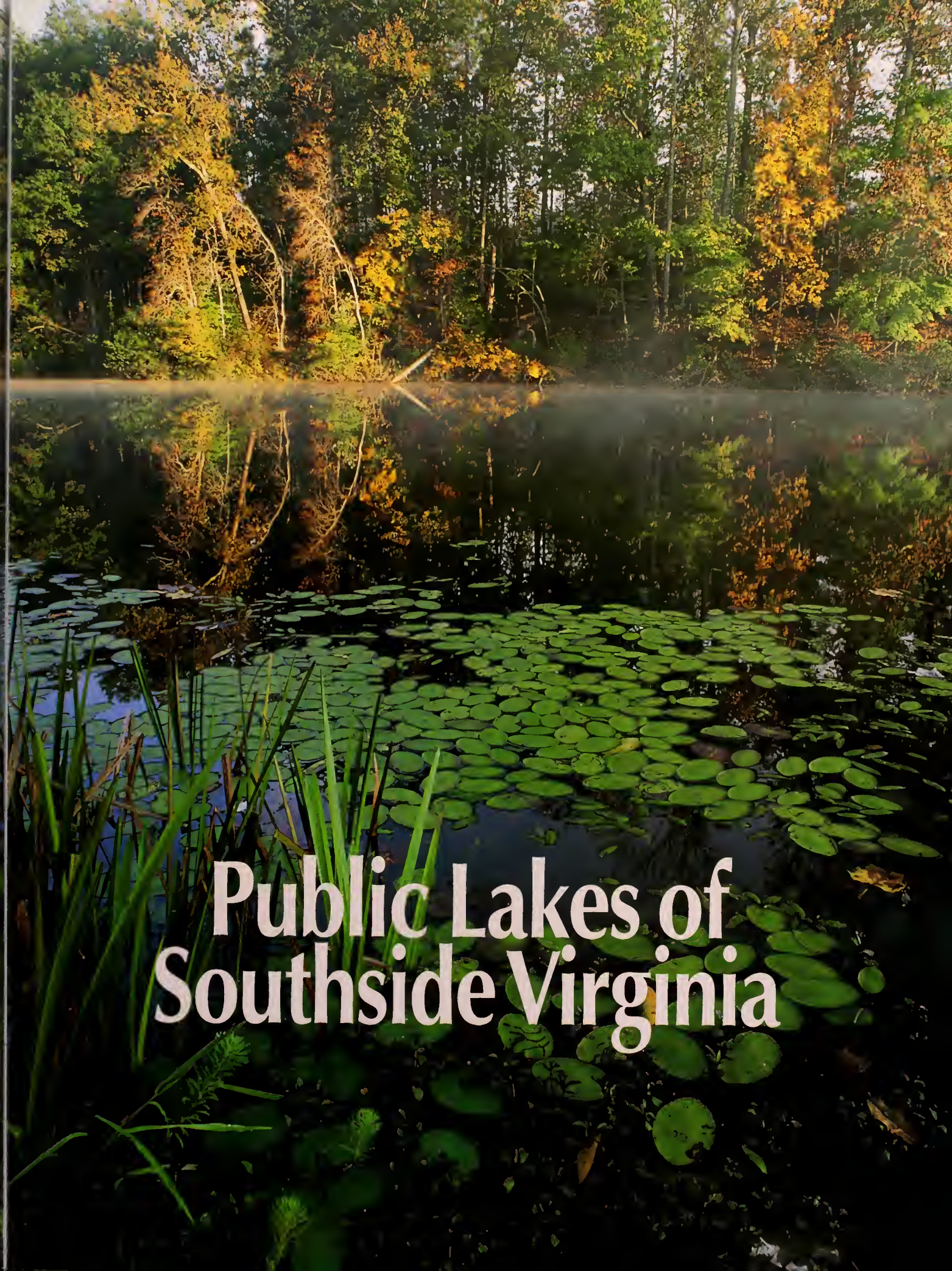


Left: Hank Woolman planes a strip of cane to a 1000th of an inch tolerance. He'll glue six similar strips together to make a beautiful handmade split-bamboo fly rod. Photos ©King Montgomery.



Public Lakes of Southside Virginia

Enjoy the great outdoors among the many public lakes of Southside Virginia.

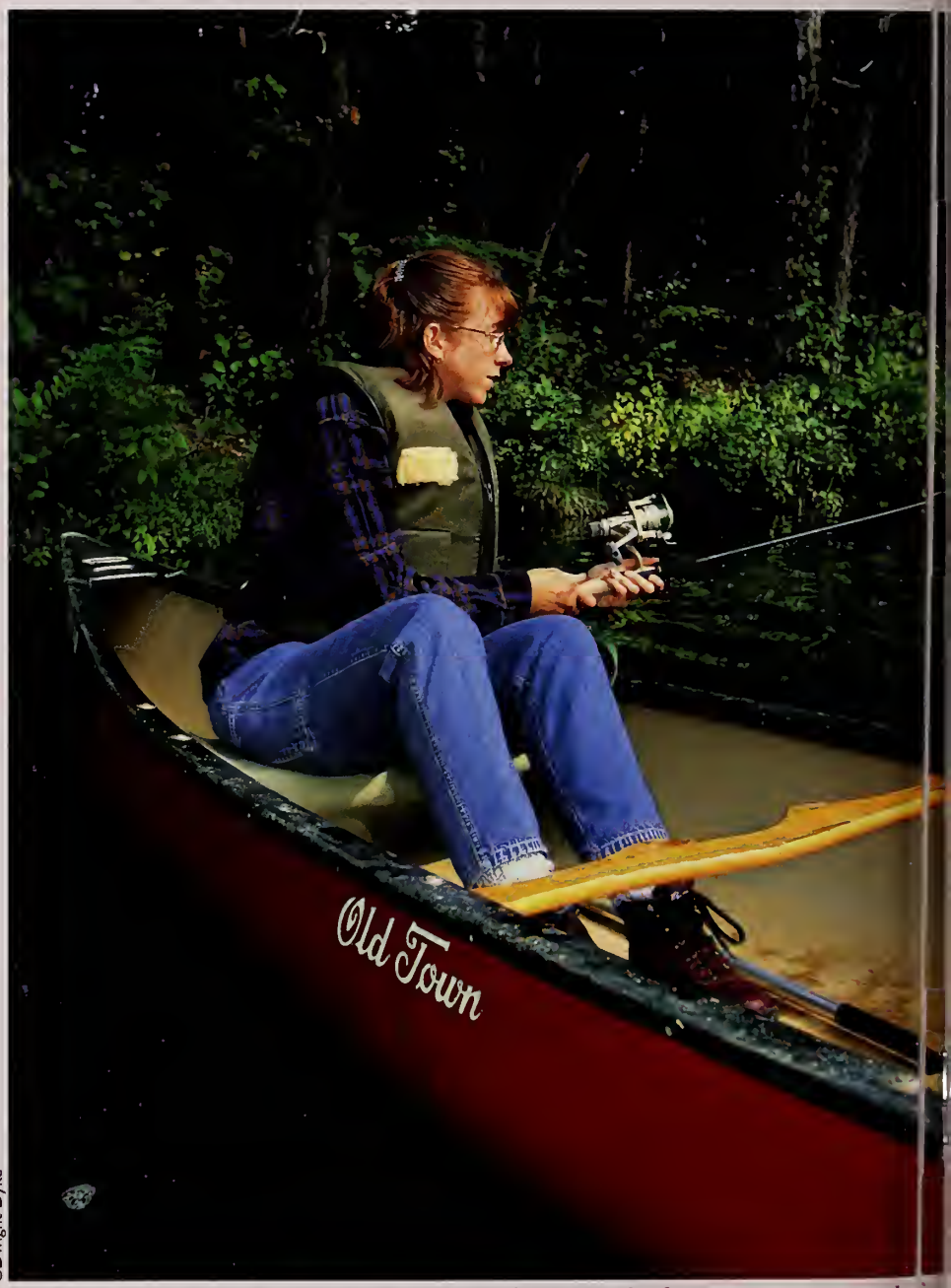
Water, water everywhere.

©Dwight Dyke

When people talk about where to go to catch BIG largemouth bass Briery Creek Lake, near Farmville, tops the list.

Southside Virginia is blessed with more than its share of freshwater lakes. The area from South Boston to South Hill and north to Crew and Farmville is home to 19 officially listed public lakes and reservoirs, one of which is over 20,000 acres, the other almost 50,000. An additional 16 lakes are accessible to the public on a military base, state park, and state forest. Of the 35 lakes and ponds, many consistently produce bass of 10 pounds and larger. Briery Creek Lake, famous for its bass fishery, is a consistent producer of bass in the 8–12 pound range. Lake Connor holds the current state record for largemouth bass—a whopping 16 pounds 4 ounces!

Add this area of Virginia to your must visit, must fish list. Many, many hours of angling excitement are to be had for anyone ready to wet a line.



©Dwight Dyke

Holliday Lake, located within Holliday Lake State Park, just outside of Appomattox, is a great place for camping, fishing, and even swimming.

©Dwight Dyke

Many of the lakes found throughout the southside of Virginia are ideal for canoes and small boats.

Public Lakes of Southside Virginia

Southside Virginia

Lake, Size & Location	Permit Req.	Boat Ramp	Picnic Facil.	Gas Motor	Boat Rental	Handi Facil.	Conces. Facil.	LMB BG	CF	CRP	SB	CP	WE	NP	WB
Amelia (100 ac) from Rt. 360 take Rt. 604 N to Rt. 616 to Rt. 652.		●				●		●	●	●			●		
Bannister (400 ac) Rt. 501 just north of Halifax.		●		●				●	●	●		●			
Briery Creek (845 ac) Rt. 15, 7 mi. south of Farmville.		●		10HP Max				●	●	●		●			
Brunswick (150 ac) on Rt. 638 off Rt. 58 east of Edgerton.		●						●	●	●		●			
Conner (110 ac) from Rt. 360 take Rt. 746 to Rt. 603 to Rt. 619 to Rt. 623E to 624S, 2 mi from Providence.		●						●	●	●		●			
Cumberland State Forest Lakes															
Arrowhead (6 ac) Rt. 60W, Rt. 622 to 629.								●	●	●					
Bear Creek (42 ac) 60W to Rt. 622 to 629.		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●					
Bonbrook (6 ac) Rt. 60W to Rt 622-623-626 to C.S.F.								●	●	●					
Oak Hill (6 ac) Rt. 60W to 622 to 629.								●	●	●					
Winston (12 ac) Rt. 60W to 622 to 629.		●	●					●	●	●					
Fort Pickett Lakes off Rt. 40 east of Blackstone,				Max											
Birchin (45 ac) limited access	●	●		30 HP				●		●		●			
Butterwood Pond (8 ac)	●	●		30 HP				●	●						
Dearing Pond (7 ac)	●	●		30 HP				●	●						
Lewis Pond (12 ac)	●			30 HP				●	●	●					
Pickett Reservoir (384 ac)	●	●		30 HP				●	●	●		●			
Reservation Pond (3 ac)	●	●		30 HP				●							
Tommeheton (51 ac) limited access	●			30 HP				●		●		●			
Twin (20 ac)	●	●		30 HP				●	●	●					
Gaston, (20,300 ac) Mecklenburg and Brunswick counties, various routes.		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Goodwin (13 ac) Twin Lake State Park, from Rt. 360 take 621 to park.		●	●		●		●	●	●	●					
Gordon (157 ac) of≥ Rt. 58 on Rt. 664 south of South Hill.		●		10 HP Max				●	●	●		●			
Great Creek (212 ac) 1 mile north of Lawrenceville off Rt. 46.		●	●					●	●	●		●			
Holliday (113 ac) Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. From 460 take Rt. 24N to Rt. 626. to 640 to 692.		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	
Horsepen (19 ac) Rt. 60 to Rt. 638 to WMA.		●	●					●	●	●					
James River Ponds Rt. 607 7 mi. north of Rt. 60 at Bent Creek.															
Branch (7 ac)			●			●		●		●					
Taylor (1 ac)			●					●		●					
Green Hill (1 ac)			●					●		●					
Kerr Reservoir (48,900 ac) Halifax and Mecklenburg counties, various routes.		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●
Modest Creek (29 ac) from Victoria - Rt. 49N to Rt. 723 to Rt. 739.								●	●			●			
Nottoway (188 ac) 6 mi north of Blackstone on Rt. 606		●		10 HP Max				●	●	●		●			
Nottoway Falls (60 ac) from Victoria - Rt. 49N to lake.		●						●	●	●		●			
Prince Edward (27 ac) Twin Lake State Park, from Rt. 360 take Rt. 621 to park.		●	●					●	●	●		●			
Sandy River Reservoir (740 ac) Rts. 460-640, 1 mile to access road.		●		10 HP Max		●		●	●	●		●	●		
Slate River Watershed (38 ac) in Appomattox-Buckingham St. Forest, 640 1 mile north of Rt. 636.		●						●	●	●		●			
Wilck's (27 ac) Rt. 460 bus. west in Farmville.		●	●					●	●	●					

Key

LMB /BG - Largemouth Bass/Bluegill
CF - Catfish
CRP - Crappie
SB - Striped Bass
CP - Chain Pickerel
WE - Walleye
NP - Northern Pike
WB - White Bass

For more information contact:
VDGIF, HC 6, Box 46
Farmville, VA 23901
434/392-9645
www.dgif.state.va.us

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

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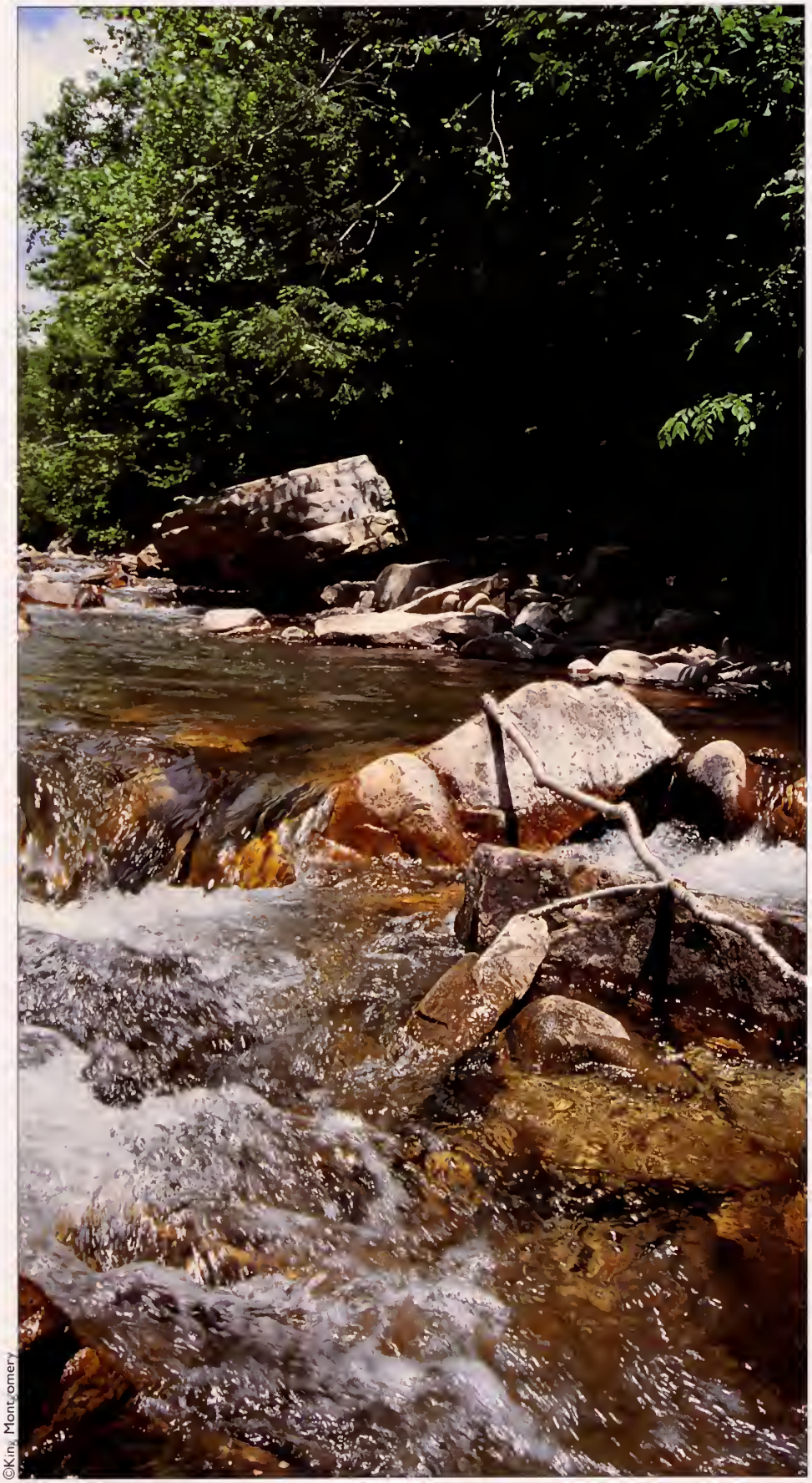
the dedicated, hard workers that have joined in work projects, supported our annual fishing show, attended meetings, and shared their ideas and their enthusiasm. It's a tribute to all of our members, including those who just believe being part of TU is their way of helping to preserve our coldwater resources for future generations as well as our own enjoyment."

That's not all! Kemper Eagle, a Rapidan TU stalwart from Manassas, was presented TU's coveted Distinguished Service award for 20 years of dedication to the Trout Unlimited goals and objectives, all as a volunteer. In giving the honor, Charles Gauvin praised Kemper for his dedication which "exemplifies the tireless commitment we count on from Rapidan Chapter volunteers. Virginia is lucky to have a conservation hero such as Kemper Eagle."

Children Are the Future

Children are the future of the outdoors. They are the ones who will take what we leave, and, hopefully, try to make it better. It is our job, and here Trout Unlimited plays a major role to ensure they learn to enjoy hunting, fishing, and to respect the environment and its ever-dwindling natural resources. All TU chapters in the Old Dominion work closely with children, and no one does it better than the folks at Rapidan TU.

Under the able and dedicated direction of member Doug Parker, Rapidan TU is actively involved with children suffering from cancer and from HIV. Each year, Rapidan TUers, augmented by members from the Northern Virginia Chapter of Trout Unlimited (NOVA TU), the Northern Shenandoah Valley Chapter, and other chapters in the Commonwealth, teach children to fish and learn streamside ecology and conservation. These aren't just any



©Kin, Montgomery

Trout Unlimited chapters in Virginia, like the Rapidan, are working closely with children to educate them about the importance of being good environmental stewards and sharing with them the simple pleasures that fishing can offer. Photos ©King Montgomery.

children; those with cancer attend Camp Fantastic and those with HIV go to Camp Funshine, both held at the Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center in Front Royal. The camps and other activities are sponsored by Special Love, Inc., a nonprofit organization based in Winchester. At the various camps, children come together to share experiences, to laugh and play, and, thanks to TU volunteers, learn how to fish, too. A chance, at least for awhile in the richness of life outdoors, to forget about medicine, the harsh treatments, and perhaps dying.

Most TU chapters in Virginia host children's events as part of their public service activities, and the Rapidan Chapter's Kid's Day is a sight to see. Hundreds of families from all over Virginia assemble on a Saturday in March at the Robinson River in Madison County near Syria. The Graves family, owner of the nearby Graves Mountain Lodge, generously allows the gathering on their land along the Robinson. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) stocks catchable size trout the day before, along a mile stretch of the river which is open only to the children. The stocking of rainbows and some brook trout is overseen by John Kaufman of the VDGIF. Game wardens and volunteers ensure poachers don't take any trout before the children have had their day.

This year's Kid's Day was the best ever. Despite the foggy start and the gray skies, over 500 people attended the all-day event, and most children, ably assisted by parents and TU volunteers, caught fish and had a lot of fun. The Madison County Volunteer Fire Company was on hand with its food trailer full of hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, soft drinks, and water. I was very pleasantly surprised that over a third of the anglers were girls—there is hope for our sport yet!

Dark Clouds

Many of Virginia's native trout, mountain streams are dying, slowly being killed by rising water acidity caused by fossil fuel-burning power plants in other states. In a vicious and deadly cycle, the smoke from coal burned to generate electricity rises to the atmosphere, undergoes a chemical change, and forms acid rain in clouds. The rain-swelled clouds are transported by prevailing winds and dump their poison in Virginia's Appalachian Mountains. Water acid levels rise beyond the stream's natural capability to control it, gradually killing everything affected by the stream. Things die off slowly at first, until algae, aquatic insects, and brook trout are all gone.

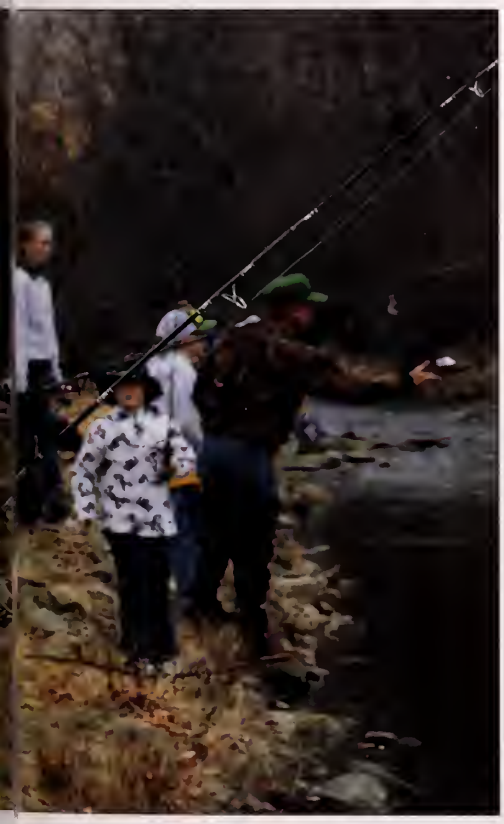
In the mid-1980s, when the beautiful St. Mary's River (a pristine little brookie stream in the George Wash-

ington National Forest), died from acid rain, a study was launched to find the problems and recommend solutions. The Virginia Trout Stream Sensitivity Study (VTSSS) was born. VTSSS is a cooperative effort between the University of Virginia, VDGIF, the Federal government and, you guessed it, the Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited.

In 1987, almost 400 stream sites in the state were sampled in a 13-day period. The study indicated that at the current rate of acid pollution many of our trout streams would not support trout populations by about 2040, and they would steadily decline until then if nothing is done. In April 2000, over 200 TUers and other volunteers teamed up with the Environmental Sciences Department at the University of Virginia to collect 400 samples from 344 brook trout streams. The information obtained from VTSSS and the data from the 1987 study may prove critical to the long-term well being of our native brookie streams.

Our outdoors is fragile, at the mercy of our relentless quest for convenience, luxury, and self-gratification. I'm all for the worldly comforts that science and technology bring, but we need to consider the environment in our calculations. Do we really need more blacktop parking at new shopping malls? Do we need that dam on the river? Do we really need to cut down all those trees for townhouses and homes so close together you could reach out a window and shake hands with a neighbor? What we do need is people who are concerned and do their best to at least maintain, if not improve, what we still have before it disappears forever. When that happens, we won't be far behind. Fortunately, we have the Woolmans, the members of Trout Unlimited chapters throughout the Old Dominion, and we have a fish and game department that cares. Working together, we can make a difference. We have to. □

King Montgomery, a frequent contributor to Virginia Wildlife, *and he is a founding member of the Trout Unlimited Stewardship Council. He lives in Annandale.*



Additional Information

Hank and Marcia Woolman, Rapidan Chapter of Trout Unlimited, (540) 253-5545.

Trout Unlimited. Call (703) 522-0200. For more information or to find a TU chapter near you see http://www.tu.org. There are 18 chapters in the Old Dominion.

Northern Virginia TU Chapter, Mike Daly, (703) 754-8954.

Northern Shenandoah Valley TU Chapter, Bud Brune, (540) 675-3183.

Graves Mountain Lodge, Syria, (540) 923-4231 or http://www.gravesmountain.com.

Rick Webb, VTSSS Coordinator, University of Virginia, (804) 924-7817.

VTSSS Website is at http://www.his.com/~mwaters/VTSSS2000.html.

Camp Fantastic and Camp Funshine. To volunteer to help teach fly fishing and conservation, contact Doug Parker, (540) 369-7098 - DParker@aol.com.

If you would like to make a difference in how we protect and preserve our valuable natural resources, then get involved by volunteering your time or join one of the many outdoor groups and organizations found across Virginia. ©King Montgomery.

Virginia Outd

Story and photos by Emily M. Grey

"Pull!" "All right!" "Yahoo!" elated youngsters and adults exclaimed while testing their shotgun skills on clay targets. Happy faces also lit up as participants practiced casting rods on trout-filled lakes and streams sparkling from the benevolent autumn sun.

During September's final weekend, families, friends, and individuals bid a last hurrah to summer at Hungry Mother State Park. Flocks of Canada geese, white-breasted nuthatches, and an occasional wild turkey shared their riparian and upland woods environment with conservation-minded humans during this energizing, gratifying getaway.

Virginia Outdoors Weekend (VOW) is a partnership program among the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and other participating sponsors. This annual event was created to advance public training in varied outdoor activities.

Re-introducing the family to the out-of-doors is perhaps the key to the conservation and, in some cases, the preservation of our world's natural resources. Virginia, through VDGIF and its state partners, takes a proactive role in educating its citizenry about the many ways to safely enjoy its abundant biodiversity.

Ashley Peterson, a home schooled 4th grader from Craig County, delighted in the fun activities at Youth Camp.

"I liked hiking, collecting stuff, and learning which plants are poisonous," she excitedly volunteered. "And, my mom and I watched a bald eagle while canoeing together!"

"We saw salamanders, crawdads, and bugs in a stream," replied

If you are looking for the perfect weekend get-away filled with exciting outdoor activities, then you owe it to yourself to check out the Virginia Outdoor Weekend, September 14-16, 2001, at Hungry Mother State Park.

Are you looking for a natural way to have some family fun? Then we've got the place for you.

James, Ashley's eight-year-old brother. "At the Discovery Center, we looked at snakes and hissing cockroaches and played computer games.

I also like the cabins and Robin, my instructor, who is nice and funny," he added.

Lisa Peterson's interest piqued when she read about the Department's, Becoming An Outdoors Women® (BOW) program.

"I was glad to learn about VOW which allowed us to do something together as a family," Mrs. Peterson explained. "Also, my husband and I decided that this would be our son's birthday party.

We are very impressed with the great organization of the program and the knowledgeable instructors. Even my husband, who already knew about the outside, has learned a lot at VOW. This is a nice, easy, and inexpensive way to become educated."

Courses offered to adults and older youngsters were as follows: Introductory Archery, Canoeing Basics, Falconry, Fish Sampling & Hatchery Tour, Lake & Stream Fishing, Map & Compass, Outdoor Cooking, Outdoor Photography, Rifle Shooting and Safety, Shotgun Shooting and Safety, Tracking and Animal Signs, Turkey Hunting, Wild Edibles, and Wilderness Survival.

"You can read a book anywhere,"

Numerous courses and activities are offered over the weekend that appeal to children as well as adults.

An introduction to canoeing and the secrets to great outdoor cooking are always favorites with participants.

said Kitty Hoover, who attended the VOW weekend with two buddies also from Lynchburg. "What struck me was the hands-on, practical skills. Wilderness survival class was great; it could have gone on and on. While roaming around in the country, women may need to know survival. I plan to assemble a kit for my vehicle.

I can hardly wait to get lost in the woods in map and compass class," she laughed.

VOW Youth Camp classes designed for children six and older included the following activities: "Critter Crawl," "Nature Crafts," "Shirt Painting," and "Scavenger Hunt" where kids learned to identify natural, innocuous living and nonliving matter.

In the game of "Water Cycle" young students laid down by the lake and discussed the origins of water. They also counted different birdcalls, created leaf prints, and spotted out-of-place objects on the "un-nature" trail.

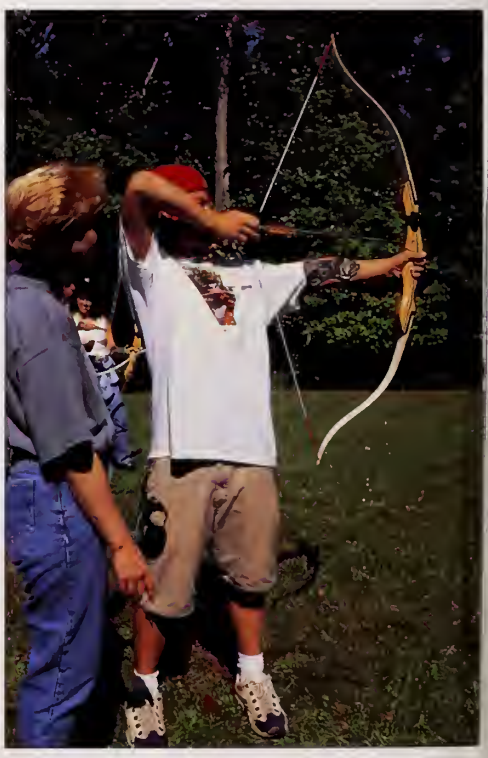
Particularly meaningful was a gentle blindfold exercise. After "seeing" partners assisted others in touching and hugging the sturdy trunk, each child "adopted" a tree.

Hungry Mother's new Discovery Center offers an array of changing exhibits. Visitors will find indigenous surprises from the park and re-

gion. Besides native wildlife, historical relics, and a gift shop, there is a weather station linked to 5,500 American schools and a flex-cam showing tiny items under a microscope onto a 36-inch television monitor.

A mere $25.00 per participant bought instruction, program materials, and Saturday night dinner with a live blue grass band. Lodging and personal expenses were separate. Each person was also responsible for transportation to the park, and program sessions, which were within walking distance of Hungry Mother's quiet woodland cabins and campgrounds. Sponsors plan to continue hosting this wholesome family event. The next VOW weekend will occur on September 14-16, 2001. ☐

Emily Grey, is a naturalist, photojournalist, and attorney, who loves to travel and is inspired by her home state of Virginia. She can be contacted at www.ecoscapeimages.com.



Don't forget to sign up early; the Virginia Outdoors Weekend is perfect for the whole family.

To learn more, contact:

VDGIF Outdoor Education Program
Attention: VOW
P.O. Box 11104
Richmond, VA 23230-1104
(804)-367-6351
www.dgif.state.va.us

For camping, lodging and recreation at Hungry Mother and other Virginia State Parks, contact:

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Virginia State Parks Reservation Center
P.O. Box 1895
Richmond, VA 23218-1895
1-800-933-7275

Hungry Mother State Park
Route 5, 2854 Park Blvd.
Marion, VA 24354
(540) 783 - 3422

Journal

VDGIF 2001 Calendar of Events

August 10–13: *Virginia Outdoor Sportsman's Show*, The Showplace, 3000 Mechanicsville Turnpike, Richmond, (804) 748-7529 or **www.sportsmanshow.com**.

August 17–19: *Wilderness Survival Weekend*, Lake A. Willis Robertson, Collierstown (near Lexington) For information call (804) 367-6351 or e-mail **hwelch@dgif.state.va.us**

September 14–16: *Virginia Outdoors Family Weekend*, Hungry Mother State Park, Smyth, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351.

September 29: *Women in the Outdoors*, Izaak Walton League Park, Centreville, Va. For information call Linda Layser (703) 425-6665 or e-mail **rglayser@msn.com**.

October 5–7: *Virginia Outdoors Woman, Mother-Daughter Event*, Appomattox, Va. For information call (804) 367-6351.

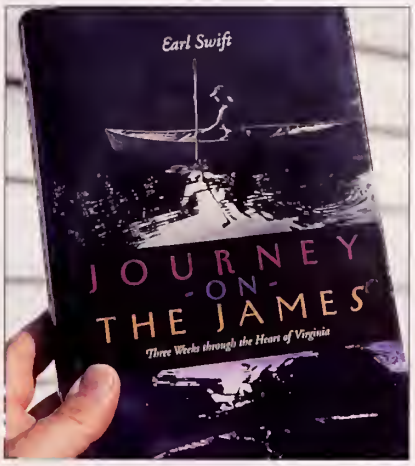
Additional information on VDGIF events can be found on the Department Web site at **www.dgif.state.va.us**. □

Journey on the James

by King Montgomery

Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia by Earl Swift, 2001, The University Press of Virginia, hardcover, 288 pages, $27.95.

Earl Swift, a staff writer for the *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, spent 22-days floating and paddling the James River initially on an innertube, mostly in a canoe, and, for the last leg of the trip, in a sea kayak. He traveled from its mountain spring source at the headwaters of the Jackson River, through the piedmont region, to the coast where the James enters the Chesapeake Bay. On his 430-mile journey through the heart and soul of Virginia, Swift learned more about the Old Dominion along the James than he must have ever hoped to imagine, and he learned a lot about himself along the way. Shadowed on the roads along the



river by staff photographer Ian Martin who was responsible for the logistics of the trip, such as carrying Gatorade, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, freeze dried foods, stove, tents, etc. Swift threw his canoe down small falls, plunging shoots, rapids, and still noticed the human and natural history along the watery course.

His was truly a voyage of discovery, and he shares it with us in this nicely-written, fun-to-read book. For example, after a particularly hard day on the river, exacerbated by a nagging nosebleed, Swift was relieved when Martin offered to drive to nearby Williamsburg for fast food so Swift doesn't have to cook. "I gratefully took him up on it," Swift says. "He returns with twenty-one dollars' worth—such an obscenely high pile that when we're finished, we both feel a bit disgusted with ourselves." Humor and knowledge are important, and Swift imparts both.

And so goes the account of the travels, interspersed with many interesting, and some little known tidbits of Virginia and American history along this living river; the only river that begins and ends in the Old Dominion. *Journey on the James* is based on a 22-part series by the same name published in the *Norfolk-Virginian Pilot* from September 13 to October 5, 1998. Swift and Martin carried laptop computers, composed daily articles at riverside, and transmitted copy and digital photos to Norfolk each evening for the next day's paper. After some masterful polishing and additional research into the geology, geography, and history of the James' watershed, Swift put it altogether in a very readable book. I'm glad he did.

Contact the University Press of Virginia at 1-800-831-3406 or http://www.upress.virginia.edu for more information or to order the book. *Journey on the James* can also be ordered from Amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com. □

Morgan Memorial Award Given to William D. Shufflebarger

by Julia Dixon Smith

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) announced that William D. Shufflebarger of Roanoke has been awarded the William D. Morgan Memorial Award for 2001. The W.D. Morgan Award is administered by VDGIF and supported by a trust fund established by Mr. and Mrs. William Morgan of Madison Heights in memory of their son, who was killed in a hunting accident in 1983.

The award was created to recognize the person who has made an outstanding contribution to the Hunter Safety program during the year. William D. Shufflebarger certainly meets and exceeds that standard. In nominating him, VDGIF Lieutenant Michael Ashworth described William Shufflebarger as having been "a constant source of energy and dedication to our Hunter Education program for over 18 years." Ashworth went on to say, "His desire to protect our hunting heritage and to educate youth has been unwavering." Mr. Shufflebarger has been instrumental in getting the Hunter Education program into the Roanoke Valley recreational departments, thereby making Hunter Education more accessible to the public.

Said Captain Terry Bradbery who oversees the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Outdoor Education programs, including Hunter Education, "William Shufflebarger represents the high caliber of volunteers who contribute to the success of Hunter Education. These are people who make a difference in so many lives by passing on not just outdoor skills and sportsmanship, but the importance of individual responsibility and safety."

Left to right: David Mays, Linda Mays, Mrs. Magdeline Morgan, William D. Shufflebarger, and Lt. Mike Asworth.

William Shufflebarger received his Hunter Education certification in 1983, and has trained more than 3,500 students and volunteered more than 2,000 hours of his time since then. He received Senior Instructor certification in 1986, and Master Instructor certification in 1988. He has completed many advanced Hunter Education courses including bow hunting, muzzle loading, trapping, shotgun, rifle and pistol, as well as ethics, woodsmanship and survival. □

Photography Workshops

Nationally recognized outdoor photographers Bill and Linda Lane, both from Virginia, will once again be offering photographic workshops in Virginia and other eastern states. Workshops extend from the mountains of the Great Smokies and Blue Ridge, to the wild and wonderful rivers of West Virginia. If the beach is more to your liking, workshops will also be offered along the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay to Virginia's Eastern Shore.

©Bill Lane

©Linda Lane

If you would like to learn more about outdoor photography or would just like to sharpen your picture taking skills, this is one opportunity you do not want to miss. Depending on the season, participants will shoot scenics, macros, animals, abstracts, wildflowers, waterfalls, and people in nature to mention but a few. Instruction is offered in the field while shooting and whenever or wherever it's needed. Not only will you depart having accomplished something to further enhance your photographic endeavors, but also relaxed, full of fine food, and with a sense of having developed a camaraderie with others. Folks who attend the Lane's photography workshops will find the sharing of information and knowledge among the participants to be invaluable. For more information on locations and times call (804) 883-7740. □

Above: Taking a class in outdoor photography is an excellent way to improve your picture taking skills.

What Goes Around, Comes Around

In 1981 readers of *Virginia Wildlife* magazine were introduced in a short article to nine-year-old Suzane Lauterback, a 5th grade student from Donahoe Elementary School in Henrico County, who was shown in a photo smiling from ear-to-ear with her first deer. Suzane got her deer while hunting with the Grange Hall Hunt Club in Chesterfield County.

Well, here it is 20 years later and Art Lauterbach, Suzane's father, writes to share with us "What goes around, comes around," His daughter Suzane, who is now all grown up, and the mother of nine-year-old James Mason Kirby, has proudly been working hard to carry on the rich tradition of hunting in her own family. Last December her son, nine-year-old James, like his mom, got his first deer at the same hunt club in Chesterfield County.

We would like to congratulate James and especially thank Art Lauterback and his daughter Suzane for showing us the importance of involving children in outdoor activities like hunting and fishing at an early age. Remember it's those first impressions that will normally follow a young person throughout his or her life. Let's hope that young James will be sending all of us a letter and photo, 20 years from now, proudly showing the outdoor accomplishment of his son or daughter. □

Invest in the Future
Lifetime Hunting and Fishing Licenses
(804) 367-1000

Report Wildlife Violations
1-800-237-5712

On The Water

by Jim Crosby, Region 4 Boater Education Coordinator

Coping With Weather Emergencies

The best way to cope with heavy weather is not to be there in the first place. Most of us go boating for fun, and there is no fun boating in foul weather. One of the best rules for safe boating is to check the weather before you go and constantly thereafter until you get off the water.

Today, you can check the weather by computer on the web, listening to your local television station, radio station, the weather channel on cable, or one of the many National Weather Service broadcasts of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on VHF-FM. The NOAA broadcasts are available on most marine radios and many small portable units sold for that specific purpose. Some even have the ability to alert you to weather emergencies with a special tone broadcast by NOAA. I have one sitting in the window of my kitchen and at the push a button I hear the latest weather report. It beeps loudly and turns itself on in the event of an emergency announcement.

Lee Walker

There is no excuse to leave home for a boating adventure without prior knowledge of what to expect in weather conditions where you are to boat. If your boating happens to be a hundred miles or so from home, it's important to remember the weather can be entirely different at those distances.

When you have done all you can to determine the weather is to be conducive to your boating activities, you can still be caught in a spontaneous thunderstorm. Thus, the need to monitor the weather constantly by keeping an eye on the western sky for those dark clouds looming on the horizon is important. Your best move is to head for cover just as soon as you determine the weather is worsening. Making a quick decision to run for cover could get you out of bad weather entirely.

If you are caught out there, get everyone into life jackets immediately. Set the example by donning yours first and then assisting the others to make sure they are properly adjusted when worn. Slow down to a reasonable and safe speed for the conditions, and head toward cover. When the wind and waves start to pick up, have everyone stay low in the boat to lower your center of gravity, close all hatches, put up any canvas you have to keep the boat as dry as possible and maintain a course that offers the least pounding on the hull. Never take waves broadside or surf down the front of a tall wave because the first wave can roll your boat and the second can cause you to pitch pole. For tall waves, it's best to take them on the bow at, or near, a 45 degree angle. Following waves can cause water to swamp over your boat's transom and it's imperative to keep your boat as dry as possible to increase your freeboard.

At the first sign of trouble in keeping your boat under control, issue a call to the Coast Guard on your VHF-FM Marine Radio using channel 16. Give them a position/situation report and ask for a radio guard —someone to listen for you in the event things get worse. Stay calm and reassure your passengers to avoid panic for they will reflect your mood and confidence.

Here's hoping you will find many bright, sunny days of cool breezes and calm waters upon which to hone your boating skills. □

RECIPES

by Joan Cone

Camp Cookouts

Practical and nutritious meal planning makes for an enjoyable camping trip. If you are going by car, then weight is not a problem, and you can carry fresh vegetables, fruits, meats, and canned goods.

Backpackers, fishermen, and canoeists need lightweight and non-refrigerated foods. One of the best ways to provide healthy and delicious meals for this group of campers is to pack dry ingredients for individual dishes in plastic zipper-type bags. Freezer-weight bags are the best and more resistant to punctures.

Following are a variety of camping dishes which are easy to assemble, carry, and prepare.

Hot Cereal With Fruit

Combine in pint plastic zipper bag:

½ cup granola
⅓ cup quick-cooking oatmeal or multi-grain cereal
⅓ cup chopped dried fruit
¼ cup nonfat dry milk powder
2 tablespoons brown sugar
Salt to taste

In medium pot, boil 1 cup water. Add mix and cook for 5 minutes or until oatmeal is done, stirring frequently to prevent sticking. Makes 2 or 3 servings.

Potato-Dill Chowder

Combine in quart plastic zipper bag:

½ cup dried diced potatoes
¼ cup instant mashed potato flakes
¼ cup nonfat dry milk powder
2 tablespoons bacon-flavored bits
1 tablespoon dried onion flakes
2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules
½ teaspoon crumbled dried dill leaves
¼ teaspoon Butter Buds, optional
A pinch of crumbled dried thyme leaves
A pinch of pepper

In medium pot, boil 1½ cups water. Add mix and stir well. Cover, remove from heat and let stand about 15 minutes. Return to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally until potatoes are tender, 5 to 10 minutes. Makes 2 servings.

Salmon Patties

Combine in pint plastic zipper bag:

½ cup Italian-style bread crumbs or other seasoned variety
½ cup powdered egg
1 teaspoon dried chopped onion
½ teaspoon dry mustard

Carry separately:

1 can (14¾ ounces) red salmon
Oil for frying
Ketchup

Drain juice from canned salmon into measuring cup. Add or subtract water to equal ½ cup. In medium bowl, combine measured juice with dry ingredients and stir well to mix. Let stand 5 minutes to rehydrate onion. Flake salmon into bowl with other ingredients. Mix well and form into 4 equal patties. Add desired amount of oil to skillet and fry patties over medium heat until well browned, about 5 minutes per side. Serve with ketchup. Makes 4 patties. **Note:** Powdered eggs are available at camping-supply stores.

Potato Pancakes

Combine in quart plastic zipper bag:

1 cup instant mashed potato flakes
2 tablespoons nonfat dry milk powder
2 tablespoons bacon-flavored bits, optional
1 tablespoon Butter Buds
1 teaspoon dried chopped onion
Salt to taste
A pinch of each: pepper, cayenne pepper, dried thyme

Carry separately:

1 whole raw egg
Oil or bacon grease for frying

In bowl, combine mix with 1 cup boiling water; stir well. Blend egg into potato mixture. Form into patties and fry until browned on both sides. Makes 4 or 5 pancakes. □

These recipes are based on those found in The Back-Country Kitchen *by Teresa Marrone, published by Northern Trails Press, Minneapolis, MN, 1996.*

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Wild Backyard

by Marlene A. Condon

Toad Houses

For some reason, many children tend to like toads, perhaps because they are often pictured in children's stories. Adults who are gardeners also tend to like toads because these amphibians help to keep down insect populations in the garden. If you want to make your yard more hospitable to these animals, provide some toad "houses."

Toads are most active at night. Although you may happen across one during the day, they are usually resting in a dark, protected area while the sun is up. A toad house is simply a place where a toad can stay put until nightfall without getting too hot and susceptible to water loss.

The easiest way to provide a toad house is to dig out a shallow trough in a shaded area, wet the soil, and cover most of the trough with a piece of lumber or a log. Both ends of the trough should be open so that the toad can get in or out of either end.

Although wetting the soil is not absolutely necessary, it will furnish drinking water for any toad that comes to visit because a toad "drinks" through its skin. Wetting some dirt is particularly helpful to toads during droughts because the soil dries up, making it difficult for a toad to get water if there is no flowing or standing water in the vicinity.

Commercially built toad houses offer a way to create new habitat.

Another way to provide a toad house is to make use of a clay flower pot. Break off a small piece on two opposite sides of the pot for entranceways by gently tapping the edge with a hammer. (You must make two holes so that the toad can escape out of one if a predator comes through the other.) It is OK if the edges are jagged, so long as the height and width of each hole is just big enough for a toad to fit through. Find a shady part of your garden or yard, wet the soil, and lay the new toad house down over the damp soil.

Peek under the toad house occasionally, but do not disturb the inhabitant too much! ☐

Toads are sometimes encountered out in the open as they search for insects.

Old logs, mulch piles, and crevices under driveways make "natural" toad houses.

Naturally Wild

story and illustration
by Spike Knuth

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

Stelgidopteryx serripennis

The rough-winged swallow will not win any bird beauty contests, but what it lacks in color it makes up for in flying ability and adaptability to its surroundings. The rough-winged is so-called because of a series of fine, recurved hooklets along the outer edge of its outside primary wing feathers—as if serrated.

Measuring 5–5 ¾ inches long, this swallow is basically grayish-brown above, with a slightly paler rump. Its underparts are a pale gray-brown, turning more whitish on its belly and undertail coverts. Similar brownish swallow species are the smaller bank swallow, which has a definite brown chest band, and juvenile tree swallows, which are all white below. The similar southern rough-winged swallow is a bird of Central and South America.

As with all swallows, the rough-winged is a master of flight, flying with powerful wing beats that tend to be deeper and slower than other swallows. It doesn't fly with the same constant twisting and turning of other swallows. It flies a more direct path, sometimes duplicating the same path like a model electric train on a track; it glides and sails for moments. Its call in flight is an occasional "brrt," but generally it is silent.

Rough-wing males arrive to their breeding grounds to establish a territory in May. The females enter the scene a little later, often to the same nest sites that they used the year before.

Rough wings are not communal nesters like bank swallows. They choose to nest alone or in scattered groups. Nests are built in burrows in sandy banks, rock crevices, in culverts, under bridges or trestles, and on covered ledges. The little birds, amazingly, can often dig their own burrow, but will sometimes use old kingfisher holes. They build a nest of twigs, grasses, other plant fibers, or whatever is available around the nest site.

Five to seven white eggs are laid, which hatch in about 14 days. Both parents tend to the feeding, and in 18–21 days the young are flying. Only one brood is raised and they will stay together as a family group for a brief period of time.

Like other swallows, they like open territory to feed in. Look for them in open fields, especially along streams, lakes, and rivers. The rearing ponds at the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' fish hatcheries are favored places for rough-wings to snatch up all manner of insects, their main food source.

While the rough-winged swallow has an ocean-to-ocean distribution, it has never been numerous. It breeds up to the southern edge of Canada, and in recent years has been moving its range northward. Rough-wings will leave Virginia in late August and early September and go south to winter in Mexico and Central America, although many winter in the southwestern United States, along the Gulf Coast, and in Florida. □

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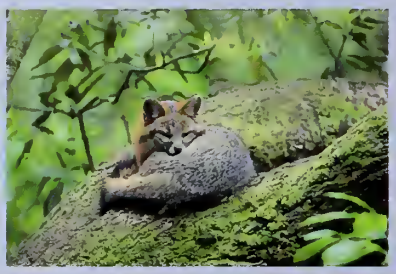

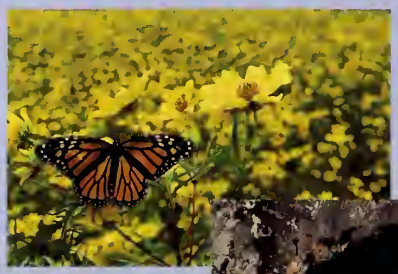

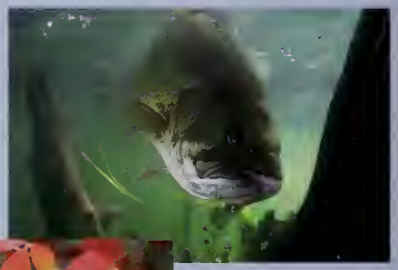

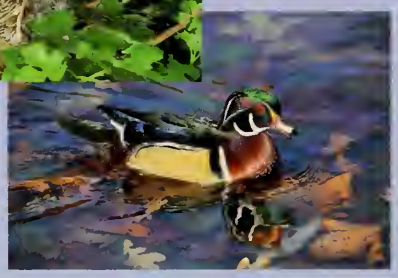

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